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Paul and God's temple

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Document Version

Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

Publication date:

2004

[Link to publication in University of Groningen/UMCG research database](#)

Citation for published version (APA):

Hogeterp, A. L. A. (2004). *Paul and God's temple: a historical interpretation of cultic imagery in the Corinthian correspondence*. [Thesis fully internal (DIV), University of Groningen]. s.n.

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CHAPTER 8

CULTIC IMAGERY IN 2 CORINTHIANS

1. The rhetorical situation of 2 Corinthians

1.1 The exigence

Paul writes his Second Letter to the Corinthians on the occasion of his plan to come to the Corinthians for the third time (cf. 2 Cor 12:14, 13:1). Paul refers back to his previous writing to the Corinthians in 2 Cor 2:3-4, the identification of which, as in the case of 1 Cor 5:9-13, has led certain scholars to formulate partition theories about letter fragments.¹ The most influential partition theory considers 2 Cor 1-9 and 2 Cor 10-13 as originally separate Letters, Paul appending the latter to 2 Cor 1-9 to exhort the Corinthians against the growing influence of Paul's opponents on them.²

It should be noted that, parallel to the closing part of 1 Corinthians, 2 Cor 9 refers to the issue of the collection, the offering for the saints (2 Cor 9:1f.), and expresses the relation between other congregations and the Corinthians in thanksgiving (2 Cor 9:13-15). 2 Cor 10-13 focuses very explicitly on Paul's opponents who suspect him of acting in a worldly fashion (2 Cor 10:2), and the passage admonishes the Corinthians for the sake of edifying their church (2 Cor 10:8, 13:10) in order that he may not have to use severe authority when visiting them (2 Cor 10:1-2, 13:10). This appears to be evidence for the integrity of 2 Cor 1-9 and 2 Cor 10-13 respectively as compositional units. The closing part of 2 Cor 13:11-14 brings the two separate parts of 2 Corinthians together.

Since the open opposition to Paul's mission by rival missionaries of the gospel characterises Paul's Letter to the Galatians so plainly, the change of tone in the transition from 2 Cor 1-9 to 2 Cor 10-13 may equally reflect these changed circumstances. While in 2 Cor 1-9 Paul still urges the Corinthians to solidarity with him in suffering and comfort for the sake of the gospel (cf. Cor 1:8-11, 6:1-13, 7:2-4), 2 Cor 10-13 expresses bitter polemic against Paul's opponents and the way in which they lead the Corinthians astray and make Paul's mission a failure (cf. 2 Cor 10:10-12, 11:1-23f., 12:11-12, 13:5-7).

Nevertheless, the notion of opponents to Paul's mission is not absent from 2 Cor 1-9. Thus, Paul writes that he is not ignorant of Satan's designs in 2 Cor 2:11 and he observes the divergent reception of his gospel in 2 Cor 2:16. Paul's remark that, being sincerely commissioned by God (2 Cor 2:17) he does not need letters of recommendation as some do (2 Cor 3:1), presupposes a contrast with rival missionaries. In fact, Paul writes about his opponents as servants of Satan disguising themselves as servants of righteousness (2 Cor 11:13-15) and as people who commend themselves (2 Cor 10:12).

The exigence of 2 Corinthians is Paul's focus on the sincerity of his gospel mission to the Corinthians in face of the growing opposition to this mission by rival missionaries and

¹ Cf. e.g. Schnelle, *Einleitung*, 101-111 for a survey of hypotheses about 2 Cor 1:1-2:13, 2:14-7:4, 6:14-7:1, 8, 9, and 10-13 as separate letter fragments.

² Cf. Schnelle, *Einleitung*, 103-105, 108-111 for arguments against identifying 1 Cor 10-13 with the 'tearful letter' mentioned in 2 Cor 2:3-4; J.L. Sumney, *Identifying Paul's opponents. The Question of Method in 2 Corinthians* (Sheffield AP, JSOT Press; Sheffield, 1990) 123-179 discusses 1 Cor 1-9 and 1 Cor 10-13 as two separate letters.

their potential influence on the Corinthians. Therefore, Paul repeatedly stresses his own unselfish, open attitude to them and counters the rival missionaries who emphasise a Jewish way of life by expressing his confidence in the gospel mission as the new covenant (2 Cor 3:4-18). In relation to Paul's focus on his sincere mission, the Corinthians are urged to show solidarity with Paul, while Paul at the same time expresses his confidence in them (cf. e.g. 2 Cor 7:4.16).

In view of the theme of solidarity, it is perhaps not surprising that Paul includes himself in the metaphor of the Temple in 2 Cor 6:16, using the first person plural (see section 3 on this). Paul's concern with the social imperfections which endanger communal holiness also characterises his writing in 2 Corinthians, as becomes clear from 2 Cor 6:14-7:1 and his exhortation in 2 Cor 12:19-21 in the interest of the Corinthians' edification.

1.2 The Corinthian audience and Paul's opponents

In 2 Corinthians, Paul addresses his audience in a way different from 1 Corinthians. While Paul exhorted the Corinthians about pride on worldly wisdom in 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians reflects a defence of Paul's mission against the accusation by his opponents about his own boasting (cf. 2 Cor 1:12). Paul stresses that his competence comes from God (2 Cor 3:5-6) and that he does not preach about himself, but about Jesus Christ as Lord (2 Cor 4:5). Dieter Georgi has observed that, in contrast to 1 Corinthians, Paul did not have to face opposite views within the Corinthian congregation but the challenge of adversaries from outside the congregation, as 2 Cor 3:1 and 11:4 show; these adversaries therefore were of a "religio-historical formation and theology different from the indigenous Corinthian believers" according to Georgi.³

Paul's message about the hidden and secret wisdom of God (cf. 1 Cor 2:6-13, 4:1-5) was probably taken to be a 'veiled gospel' by his opponents (2 Cor 4:3-4f.), whom Paul perceived as unbelievers. Paul instead characterises the 'old covenant', the source of authority for his opponents, as veiled. The strong emphasis on openness and solidarity throughout 2 Cor 1-9 urges the Corinthians to share Paul's perspective and takes this solidarity as a point of departure, as Paul's repeated remark about his confidence in them reveals. Thus, 2 Cor 6:14-7:1 presupposes the disjunction between the perspectives of believers and unbelievers.

In his study about the identification of Paul's opponents in 2 Corinthians, Jerry L. Sumney has noted that the opponents have a clear profile as Pneumatics in 2 Cor 10-13, whereas 2 Cor 1-9 lacks such a profile.⁴ Sumney nevertheless concludes that the opponents in 2 Cor 1-9 and 2 Cor 10-13 are the same group.⁵ This affirms the idea of a growing opposition by rival missionaries against Paul's gospel, as reflected throughout 2 Corinthians. These circumstances may also inform our reading of cultic imagery in 2 Corinthians, especially the passage with temple imagery, 2 Cor 6:14-7:1.

³ D. Georgi, *The Opponents of Paul in Second Corinthians* (ET from the German *Die Gegner des Paulus im 2 Korintherbrief*, 1986; T&T Clark: Edinburgh, 1987) 317.

⁴ Sumney, *Identifying Paul's opponents*, 183; cf. page 177: "the problems at Corinth stem from the disagreement between Paul and his rivals over the way that the Spirit operates in apostles' lives".

⁵ Sumney, *Identifying Paul's opponents*, 183-186.

1.3 The constraints

Paul's persuasion of the holiness and sincerity of his gospel mission was constrained by the suspicion that this mission was a worldly activity, as aroused by Paul's opponents. In defence against these suspicions, Paul emphasises the Corinthians' need to apply his instructions and exhortations to themselves and to test their faith and obedience (cf. 2 Cor 2:9f., 7:9-11, 13:5-10).

2. 2 Corinthians 2:14-17, the sincerity and truth of Paul's gospel

Within 2 Corinthians, Paul first uses language with cultic connotations in 2 Cor 2:14-17.⁶ This passage forms an excursion from the preceding verses (2 Cor 2:12-13) which recount events in Paul's missionary journey. The verses following 2 Cor 2:14-17, that is, 2 Cor 3:1-6, comprise Paul's defence of his gospel against opponents who boast of the authority of their rival mission. 2 Cor 2:14-17 defines the place of Paul's gospel between the congregations that are touched by his mission and his opponents. Paul trusts on the eventual success of his mission, as is revealed by his record of triumph in 2 Cor 2:14. The text of 2 Cor 2:14-17 follows below.

2:14 Τῷ δὲ θεῷ χάρις τῷ πάντοτε θριαμβεύοντι ἡμᾶς ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ καὶ τὴν ὁσμὴν τῆς γνώσεως αὐτοῦ φανεροῦντι δι' ἡμῶν ἐν παντὶ τόπῳ· 15 ὅτι Χριστοῦ εὐωδία ἔσμεν τῷ θεῷ ἐν τοῖς σωζομένοις καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἀπολλυμένοις, 16 οἷς μὲν ὁσμὴ ἐκ θανάτου εἰς θάνατον, οἷς δὲ ὁσμὴ ἐκ ζωῆς εἰς ζωὴν. καὶ πρὸς ταῦτα τίς ἱκανός; 17 οὐ γάρ ἐσμεν ὡς οἱ πολλοὶ καπηλεύοντες τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ, ἀλλ' ὡς ἐξ εἰλικρινείας, ἀλλ' ὡς ἐκ θεοῦ κατέναντι θεοῦ ἐν Χριστῷ λαλοῦμεν.⁷

2:14 *'But thanks to God who leads us in triumph at all times in Christ and reveals the fragrance of the knowledge of him through us in every place; 15 for we are the fragrance of Christ for God among those who are saved and among those who perish, 16 for some a fragrance from death to death, for others a fragrance from life to life. Who is fit even for these things? 17 for we are not like the many who peddle the word of God, but as people with pure motives, but from God we speak before God in Christ'.*

In 2 Cor 2:14-16, Paul expresses the power of his gospel of Christ through cultic terms which evoke the idea of a pleasing fragrance to God in the sacrificial cult. The cultic terms of 'fragrance', ὁσμὴ, and 'aroma', εὐωδία mentioned in this passage have been interpreted by scholars against the background of figurative usage derived from the contemporary Jewish Temple cult. Hans-Josef Klauck has pointed to parallels to the figurative usage of these cultic terms in Jewish literature of the Second Temple period.⁸ In a recent study, David A. Renwick has interpreted 2 Cor 2:14-17 by connecting the cultic significance of the sacrificial terms 'fragrance', ὁσμὴ, and 'aroma', εὐωδία, with the theme of the "suffering apostleship".⁹

⁶ This passage is considered to be part of a larger pericope, 2 Cor 2:14-3:6, by R.P. Martin, *Word Biblical Commentary* 40 *2 Corinthians* (Word Books: Waco, Tex., 1986) 43-56, designating it as "The Apostle's Adequacy for Ministry", and by C. Wolff, *Der zweite Brief des Paulus an die Korinther* THKNT 8 (Evangelische Verlagsanstalt: Berlin, 1989) 53-59, designating it as "Thanksgiving to God for the magnitude of the apostleship. The capacity for the apostleship".

⁷ The established Greek text of 2 Cor 2:14-17 is hardly changed by minor variant readings. These comprise Clement of Alexandria's reading of κυρίου εὐωδία instead of Χριστοῦ εὐωδία in 2 Cor 2:15; the double omission of the preposition ἐκ from 2 Cor 2:16; οἱ λοιποί, 'the others' instead of οἱ πολλοί, and κατενώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ instead of κατέναντι θεοῦ in 2 Cor 2:17.

⁸ Klauck, 'Kultische Symbolsprache bei Paulus', 112 referring to Sir 24:15, 39:14 and 1QS VIII, 9.

⁹ D.A. Renwick, *Paul, the Temple, and the presence of God* (BJS 224; Brown University, 1991) 61-94.

In the cultic context of the contemporary Jewish sacrificial cult, the terms of fragrance and aroma mentioned above apply to the covenant with God, as mediated by the priestly service. Sirach 45:7 presents the prototypical idea of a priestly covenant in which the priesthood given to Aaron mediates between God and the people. Sirach 45:16 mentions the 'pleasing odour', εὐωδία, among other cultic offerings as a memorial offering, in order to make atonement for the people. In Sirach 50:15 we read about a case of libation that is 'a pleasing aroma to the Most High, the King of all', ὁσμὴ εὐωδίας ὑψίστω παμβασίλει.¹⁰ The compound term ὁσμὴ εὐωδίας in the Septuagint renders the expression ריח הניחח in the Hebrew Bible. In the Dead Sea Scrolls, there are also many instances of the expression of ריח ניחוח (plene spelling) in relation to the theme of atonement for the land of Israel (in 1QS VIII, 9; 1QSb III, 1; 4QJub^{a,b,d,e}; 4QD^a; 11QT^a).

Paul's use of cultic terminology here appears to underline Paul's sincere engagement with his mission in relation to God, even if those who receive the gospel do not all accept it. The idea of a commission from God (1 Cor 2:17) in combination with the cultic terms further evokes an analogy with the priestly service, with which Paul has already compared his apostleship in 1 Cor 9:13.

3. 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1, God's Temple and the communal way of life

3.1 The rhetorical unit and literary status of 2 Cor 6:14-7:1

The rhetorical unit of 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1 again includes the metaphor of the community as Temple (2 Cor 6:16) and refers to issues of purity and defilement (2 Cor 6:17, 7:1). Its unity as a pericope is generally granted in scholarly literature, but the evaluation of its style and contents as well as its place within 1 Cor 6-7 have led to continuous debate about the (in)authenticity of this passage. Scholarly positions on the literary status of 2 Cor 6:14-7:1 have been and continue to be divided between the hypotheses of interpolation, of a Pauline edition of a pre-Pauline tradition, and of the Pauline origin of this pericope.¹¹ Certain types of evidence for the testing of the hypothesis of an interpolation, as categorised by William O. Walker (see my chap. 6, section 2.2), appear to predominate the debate. Thus, many commentators refer to the linguistic evidence of *hapax legomena*, words not otherwise figuring in Paul's Letters, and to *locational* evidence, that is, the understanding of 2 Cor 6:14-7:1 as an abrupt interruption of the stream of thought expressed in 2 Cor 6:13 and continued in 2 Cor 7:2. As a pericope out of place, 2 Cor 6:14-7:1 would therefore be an interpolation.

¹⁰ On the evidence of cultic imagery in the different textual witnesses to Sirach, see also F.W. Reiterer, 'Gott und Opfer' and the same author's synoptic survey 'Opferterminologie in Ben Sira', in R. Egger-Wenzel (ed.), *Ben Sira's God. Proceedings of the International Ben Sira Conference, Durham – Ushaw College 2001* (BZAW 321; Walter de Gruyter: Berlin & New York, 2001) 136-179 and 371-374 at 175 noting that atonement and the forgiveness of sins in Sirach is not a matter of proper ritual conduct but of religious sincerity and social justice.

¹¹ For a recent survey of scholarly positions, see e.g. M.E. Thrall, *A critical and exegetical commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians I Introduction and Commentary on II Corinthians I-VII* (T&T Clark: Edinburgh, 1994) 25-36; cf. H.D. Betz, "2 Cor 6:14-7:1: An Anti-Pauline Fragment?", *JBL* 92 (1973) 88-108; G.D. Fee, "II Corinthians VI.14-VII.1 and food offered to idols", *NTS* 23 (1977) 140-161; V.P. Furnish, *II Corinthians* (AB; Doubleday: Garden City, NY, 1984) 371-383; J. Murphy-O'Connor, "Relating 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1 to its Context", *NTS* 33 (1987) 272-275; idem, "Philo and 2 Cor 6:14-7:1", *RB* 95 (1988) 55-69; R. Bieringer, "Der 2. Korintherbrief in den neuesten Kommentaren", *ETL* 67 (1991) 107-130; G. Saß, "Noch einmal: 2 Kor 6,14-7,1. Literarkritische Waffen gegen einen >unpaulinischen< Paulus?", *ZNW* 84 (1993) 36-64; R. Bieringer, '2 Korinther 6,14-7,1 im Kontext des 2. Korintherbriefes. Forschungsüberblick und Versuch eines eigenen Zugangs', in idem & J. Lambrecht, *Studies on 2 Corinthians* (BETL 112; Leuven UP / Peeters: Leuven, 1994) 551-570.

In my view, 2 Cor 6:14-7:1 may be included into our survey of cultic imagery in Paul's Letters as a *Pauline* passage, taking the possibility of Pauline transformation into account. In my defence of this idea, I will draw different types of evidence into the argument, without pretending to convey a complete answer to all issues in the debate. Nevertheless, it may be possible to comment on some of the main lines of thought represented by the interpolation hypothesis to refute at least this position and to integrate the evidence of cultic terminology from 2 Cor 6:14-7:1 into our discussion.

3.1.1 *Hapax legomena*

The *hapax legomena* are numerous according to scholars who favour the interpolation hypothesis. They usually refer to the following examples: μετοχή, μέρος, καθαρίζω, συμφώνησις, συγκατάθεσις, Βελιάρ, παντοκράτωρ, μολυσμός, ἑτεροζυγέω, and ἐμπεριπατέω.¹² However, Ralph P. Martin has noted that many of these *hapax legomena* are hardly convincing as an argument in favour of interpolation. Themes expressed by the contrasts between ναὸς θεοῦ and εἰδωλὸν (2 Cor 6:16), δικαιοσύνη and ἀνομία (2 Cor 6:14), φῶς and σκότος (2 Cor 6:14), πιστός and ἄπιστος (2 Cor 6:15), and between πνεῦμα and σάρξ (2 Cor 7:1) also occur in 1 Corinthians and Romans. Furthermore, some of these terms figure in 'quotations' from Scripture,¹³ while other terms can be tied to verbs otherwise used by Paul (e.g. μετοχή - μετέχειν; μολυσμός - μολύνειν).¹⁴

The figure of Beliar occurs only in 2 Cor 6:15, but this by itself does not point to a non-Pauline provenance of the passage. The contrast between Beliar and Christ underpins the christological idea in 2 Cor 6:15. The parallels in contemporary Jewish literature to Paul's reference to Belial suggest that Paul used common imagery of his time. Interestingly, the defilement of the Temple figures in the *Damascus Document*, in a digression about the 'three nets of Belial', שלושת מצודות בלעל (CD-A IV, 15), in the context of an interpretation of Isaiah 24:17. Thus, these three nets stand for the three iniquities of the defilement of the Temple, fornication (הזנות), and wealth (ההון).¹⁵ Beliar, a variant of Belial, figures in 2 Cor 6:15 at the beginning of our rhetorical unit which recapitulates the metaphor of the community as Temple of God in 2 Cor 6:16 called the "Temple of the living God", ναὸς θεοῦ ζῶντος. The figure of Belial, however, is not limited to the sectarian literature of Qumran.¹⁶ The works of Belial are further opposed to the law of the Lord in the *Testament of Levi* 19:1, which adds the contrast between light and darkness.

¹² Cf. e.g. the lists of *hapax legomena* in Furnish, *II Corinthians* AB, 376; Wolff, 2. *Korinther* THKNT, 146; Thrall, *II Corinthians I-VII* ICC, 29; Schnelle, *Einleitung*, 106.

¹³ Paul's 'quotation' from Scripture in 2 Cor 6:16-18 does not concern literal, *verbatim* quotation.

¹⁴ Martin, *2 Corinthians* WBC, 192, who further refers to the parallel of σύζυγος in Phil 4:3 to ἑτεροζυγεῖν and to Fee's argument in *NTS* 23 (1977) 147 that "the authenticity of this passage is not called into question by the *hapax legomena*".

¹⁵ CD-A IV, 14-18. Cf. García Martínez & Tigchelaar, *The Dead Sea Scrolls. Study Edition* I, 557 translating הון as 'wealth', and the textual note on the confusion of הון to be read as הון in Campbell, *The Use of Scripture in the Damascus Document* 1-8, 19-20, 108, 116-118 ("a vagueness in distinction between *waws* and *yods*, a common feature in numerous sectarian DSS, as well as in Hebrew MSS of medieval times", 108).

¹⁶ Apart from the passage about the nets of Belial in CD-A IV, 15, the presence of the figure of Belial is further pervasive in Qumranite dualism: 4QMMT C 29; 1QS I 18, 23-24, II 5; CD-A V 18, VIII 2, XII 2; 5Q13 fr. 5, 2; 1QH^a XI 28-29, 32, XII 13-14, XIII 39, XIV 21, XV 3; 4Q88 X 10; 4Q286 fr. 7, II, 1-6; 1QM I 1, 5, 13, 15, IV 2, XIII 2, 4, 11, XIV 9, XV 3, 17, XVI 11, XVII 15, XVIII 1, 3; 4Q175 I. 23; 11Q13 II 13, 25, III 7; 4Q171 II 10-11; 4Q176 frgs. 8-11, I. 15; 4Q174 frgs. 1 col. I, 21, 2, lines 8-9, frgs. 1 col. II, 3, 24, 5, line 2, fr. 4, line 3; 4Q177 II 4, III 8, 10, IV 9, 11-12, 14, 16, V 5, 10; 4Q253 fr. 3, line 2; 4Q225 fr. 2, col. II, 14; 4Q390 fr. 2, I, 4.

The prominence of Belial in the pseudepigraphical Testaments literature¹⁷ relativises the idea of specific affinities between 2 Cor 6:14-7:1 and Essene or Qumranite thought, as suggested by some scholars.¹⁸ This pseudepigraphical literature also circulated outside sectarian circles.¹⁹ Moreover, Jerome Murphy-O'Connor has countered this exclusive comparison with Qumranite and Essene thought on the basis of a comparative study of parallels with Philo.²⁰ We may summarily conclude that 'hapax legomena' by themselves do not provide evidence for a non-Pauline, even sectarian provenance of 2 Cor 6:14-7:1. It is therefore necessary to go beyond the mere linguistic question of hapax legomena and to turn to the question of the ideas expressed in our passage, in comparison with Pauline thought in the undisputed parts of Paul's Letters.

3.1.2 Non-Pauline ideas

Another argument, related to the language of 2 Cor 6:14-7:1, is the idea that the use of certain concepts in this pericope are otherwise foreign or even opposed to Paul's thought, as conveyed by the rest of the Pauline Letters. As a fundamental point in his survey of 'non-Pauline features', Victor Paul Furnish has stressed that "nowhere else does the apostle counsel the kind of separation from *unbelievers* envisioned here (6:14-16a, 17a)".²¹ More recently, Christoph Heil has noted that the language of separation with its cultic connotations in 2 Cor 6:17 contrasts with the idea of separation as found in Paul's undisputed Letters.²² Since the interpretation of the kind of separation is of basic importance for our understanding of 2 Cor 6:14-7:1, my argument here focuses mainly on this issue. I will deal with other features which could be non-Pauline when going through the text.

The idea of separation in 2 Cor 6:14-7:1 and anthropology

Should 2 Cor 6:14-7:1 be read as reflecting a Jewish sectarian idea of separation from unbelievers or as an early Christian, even Pauline idea of maintaining communal boundary lines? How can we decide in favour of the former or the latter reading? The grid-group matrix of Mary Douglas (discussed in the previous chapter 7, section 1.3) may provide a heuristic tool for comparing the theology in 2 Cor 6:14-7:1 with that of the undisputed Pauline Letters. If this theology can be identified as sectarian (high group / low grid) in contrast to the theology in Paul's undisputed Letters, this would be an argument in favour of the non-Pauline provenance of 2 Cor 6:14-7:1. If this cannot be demonstrated, the argument of 2 Cor 6:14-7:1 as a non-Pauline fragment should be repudiated.

¹⁷ *T. Reu.* 4:11, 6:3, *T. Levi* 18:12, 19:2, *T. Jud.* 25:3, *T. Iss.* 6:1, *T. Zeb.* 9:8, *T. Dan* 4:7, 5:1.10-11, *T. Naph.* 3:1, *T. Ash.* 1:8, 3:2, *T. Jos.* 7:4, *T. Benj.* 3:3, 7:1-2. See also *The Lives of the Prophets* 4:6.20, 17:2; *Jubilees* 1:20, 15:33, and *Sib.Or.* 2.167, 3.63.73.

¹⁸ See J. Gnilka, '2 Cor 6:14-7:1 in the light of the Qumran texts and the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs', in J. Murphy-O'Connor (ed.), *Paul and Qumran. Studies in New Testament Exegesis* (G. Chapman: London, 1968) 48-68 at 66; J.A. Fitzmyer, S.J., 'Qumran and the interpolated paragraph in 2 Cor 6:14-7:1', in idem, *Essays on the Semitic Background of the New Testament* (G. Chapman: London, 1971) 205-217; Martin, *2 Corinthians* WBC, 195f.

¹⁹ Cf. Kee, 'Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs', in *OTP* I, 775-781.

²⁰ Murphy-O'Connor, 'Philo and 2 Cor 6:14-7:1', *RB* 95 (1988) 55-69.

²¹ Furnish, *II Corinthians* AB, 376.

²² C. Heil, 'Die Sprache der Absonderung in 2 Kor 6,17 und bei Paulus', in R. Bieringer (ed.), *The Corinthian Correspondence* (BETL 125; Leuven UP / Peeters: Leuven, 1996) 717-729.

2 Cor 6:14-16a with its many antitheses seems very rigid in its admonishment to a certain form of separation from unbelievers when read at face value. However, much depends on the interpretation of the exhortation. The antitheses suggest a total incompatibility between the entities contrasted to each other. Does this mean that any contact with unbelievers is prohibited in this passage? A number of arguments speak against this idea.

First, the rhetorical force of the antitheses may be to get the message across that unbelievers should not have the kind of influence to make the effect of conversion of the believers undone or vain. This could explain the use of the Greek verb ἐτεροζυγεῖν in the opening exhortation, which denotes the activity of yoking unevenly or mismatching, that is, the creation of an uneven, unbalanced situation. The unbalanced situation of a persistence in former sins is in fact what Paul fears to find among the Corinthians, as 2 Cor 12:20-21 reveals. It cannot be proved that the exhortation of 2 Cor 6:14 signifies the prohibition of every contact with unbelievers. In this respect, the exhortation of 2 Cor 6:14 is less unequivocal than the much clearer and stricter language of dissociation in 1 Cor 5:9,11, for the Greek μὴ συναναμίγνυσθαι and μηδὲ συνεσθῆναι leave hardly any room for ambiguity. In my view, the exhortation rather serves to raise the awareness of the addressees about the necessity of keeping the way of life as believers untainted by sin. Thus, the exhortation aims to alert the mentality of the believers in a way probably similar to Paul's quotation of the contemporary proverb from Menander that 'bad company ruins good morals' in 1 Cor 15:33.

Secondly, if our passage reflected the interests of law-abiding Jews or Christian Jews who would strongly argue for separation from the Gentiles as 'unbelievers', it is striking that 2 Cor 6:14-7:1 lacks a direct reference to the Law. Our passage is further not as much focused on the observance of specific regulations as certain sectarian texts are. The *Testament of Levi* 19:1 also conveys antitheses, between light and darkness, and between the Law of the Lord and the works of Beliar. This last antithesis mirrors a clear concern with observance of the Law. The antithesis in 2 Cor 6:14 between righteousness and lawlessness or iniquity, depending on the translation of ἀνομία, is far less explicitly or demonstrably concerned with the observance of the Law.

The third argument which speaks against the idea of an absolute prohibition of contact with unbelievers may be drawn from Paul's Letter to the Romans. Romans 6:19 contrasts a former situation, without baptism and initiation into the faith in Christ as impurity (ἀκαθαρσία) and lawlessness (ἀνομία), to the new situation in which the Christian is marked by righteousness for sanctification (ἡ δικαιοσύνη εἰς ἁγιασμόν). In the context of this passage, Paul speaks the bodies of those whose changed situation through conversion he addresses. Interestingly, 2 Cor 6:14-16a, which refers to the contrast between righteousness and lawlessness, is followed up by a section which turns to the issue of separation from uncleanness for the purpose of holiness (2 Cor 6:16b-7:1). Thus, the antitheses in 2 Cor 6:14-7:1 are paralleled in Pauline thought in the undisputed Pauline Letters.

Although the antitheses in 2 Cor 6:14-16a probably constitute a rhetorical mode through which the addressees are urged to a right mentality in their Christian way of life, it remains a fact that these antitheses express a strong sense of dualism. Paul's undisputed Letters, however, are not devoid of dualism either, considering the terminology in 1 Thess 5:5 about the 'sons of light' and the 'sons of the day' in contrast to the idea of belonging 'to the night or to darkness'. Likewise, Gal 5:16-26 conveys a sharp contrast between the 'works of the flesh' and the 'fruit of the Spirit'.

The dualism reflected by the antitheses in 2 Cor 6:14-16a may serve to protect the Corinthian community against the threat of corrupting influences from outside. Significantly, the passage following 2 Cor 6:14-7:1 includes references to mourning and repentance (2 Cor 7:7-10). 2 Cor 12:21 emphasises mourning and repentance for those among the Corinthians who continue to practise sins of impurity, immorality and licentiousness.

Mary Douglas has succinctly noted that the function of boundary marking and separation is not so much the imposition of a rigid dualism, but the creation of a “semblance of order” in view of an “inherently untidy experience”.²³ Since the dualist tendency of 2 Cor 6:14-16a is not supplemented by a detailed, descriptive account of separation as in the Qumranite sectarian text, the *Rule of the Community*, we are not justified to conclude that the passage evokes a sectarian social setting. The last antithesis between the Temple of God and idols is, however, particularly reminiscent of a contemporary Jewish background.

Non-Pauline and anti-Pauline features

It may be noted that the scriptural testimony in 2 Cor 6:16c-18²⁴ is not introduced by the more usual formula γέγραπται in Paul but by the words καθὼς εἶπεν ὁ θεὸς ὅτι. The verses quoted and altered are followed by the words λέγει κύριος (v.17) and λέγει κύριος παντοκράτωρ (v.18), whereas κύριος in Paul otherwise frequently refers to Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, as Margaret E. Thrall has noted, the phrase λέγει κύριος is paralleled by expressions in Rom 12:19, 14:11, and 1 Cor 14:21.²⁵ Furthermore, if the combination κύριος παντοκράτωρ in 2 Cor 6:18 is unique to Paul's Letters, so is the combination κύριος σαβαώθ, while both combinations are biblical Greek frequently occurring in the Septuagint.

The concept of the ‘believer’, πίστος, in 2 Cor 6:15 has been interpreted as a non-Pauline term.²⁶ This interpretation can be countered by reference to 1 Cor 4:17 in which Paul talks about Timothy as πίστὸν ἐν κυρίῳ. Furthermore, 1 Cor 14:22 contrasts ἀπίστοι to τοῖς πιστεύουσιν in the context of discourse about that which edifies the church.

The sanctification mentioned in 2 Cor 7:1 “in the fear of the Lord”, ἐν φόβῳ θεοῦ, has further been interpreted as a non-Pauline idea of an action for which all responsibility falls on the believers, independent from God's supervision.²⁷ The concept of fear of the Lord is, however, paralleled in Isaiah 11:2 which relates godly fear to the Spirit of God (πνεῦμα τοῦ θεοῦ, LXX; יְהוָה יְרוּחַ, MT). The idea of sanctification may be compared with the use of the verb שָׁקַד which signifies sanctification in 1QH^a XIX, 10-11.13. Thus, the seemingly non-Pauline idea of sanctification expressed by the verb ἐπιτελεῖν in 2 Cor 7:1 is understandable against the background of contemporary Jewish tradition. Josephus often uses this same verb in the context of offering sacrifices in the Jerusalem Temple cult.

Finally, we may challenge the idea of ‘anti-Pauline features’²⁸ in 2 Cor 6:14-7:1 on general grounds. The early church, as represented in the later New Testament writings such as the Acts of the Apostles, has granted Paul an important place in the apostolic mission to the diaspora. The pseudepigraphic authors who supposedly wrote the Deutero-Pauline Letters can neither have been opponents of Paul with regard to his mission to the Gentiles in the diaspora. It is therefore unlikely that opponents of Paul could have inserted 2 Cor 6:14-7:1 as an ‘anti-Pauline’ fragment into the manuscript tradition of that same church concerning Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians. The manuscript tradition, which does not provide a single example

²³ Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 5.

²⁴ Cf. Furnish, *II Corinthians* AB, 371-383 at 373; Fitzmyer, ‘4QTestimonia and the New Testament’, *TS* 18 (1957) 513-37, referring to the beginning of the *testimonia* hypothesis postulated by E. Hatch in 1889.

²⁵ Thrall, *II Corinthians I-VII* ICC, 478.

²⁶ Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 373.

²⁷ Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 376.

²⁸ Cf. Furnish, *II Corinthians* AB, 376-377 mentions ‘anti-Pauline features’, “in no way incompatible with the views of Paul's opponents” referring to the position of H.D. Betz.

of omission of this pericope,²⁹ does not support such an ingenious theory either, for if the idea conveyed in 2 Cor 6:14-7:1 were anti-Pauline, traces of controversy with the Pauline camp within the church could be expected to be extant in the manuscript tradition.

3.1.3 2 Cor 6:14-7:1 in the context of 2 Cor 6-7

Finally, the argument that 2 Cor 6:14-7:1 is out of place in the context of 2 Cor 6-7 depends on whether one interprets this pericope as an interruption of a subject treated in the verses preceding and following 2 Cor 6:14-7:1. As we have seen before, however, Paul does not write a systematic digression in which he closes the discussion of one subject before he opens the discussion of another.

The subject of exhortation to the Corinthians, at the instrument to open their hearts to Paul in 2 Cor 6:13 and 7:2 is not necessarily contradicted by 2 Cor 6:14-7:1. This pericope might be read as Paul's instruction for the Corinthians' sanctification which may help remove the restrictions in the Corinthians' hearts (2 Cor 6:12) caused by their possible lack of dissociation and repentance from iniquities in their midst (cf. 2 Cor 7:8-9f., 13:19-21). 2 Cor 6:14-7:1 may thus recapitulate the idea of boundary marking.

3.1.4 2 Cor 6:14-7:1 as a Pauline passage

The interpolation theory has been defended in older scholarship,³⁰ and revived by William O. Walker, Jr. However, more recently several scholars have tended to argue in favour of authenticity on the basis of a theory according to which Paul used a pre-existing composition and adapted it to his own purpose.³¹ Recently, scholars have also become more sceptical about the argument that perceived similarities between 2 Cor 6:14-7:1 and the sectarian thought of Qumran would point to the non-Pauline nature of the pericope.³² Having outlined some of the arguments concerning the interpolation hypothesis which may be refuted, I join the growing consensus about 2 Cor 6:14-7:1 as a *Pauline* passage, at least in its end-redaction.

In the case of Pauline redaction, the question arises whether 2 Cor 6:14-7:1 in its entirety or only the testimonium in 2 Cor 6:16c-18 should be regarded as of pre-Pauline origin. In view of the divergent introductory formulas to the scriptural quotations in 2 Cor 6:16c-18, and the analogy between the themes in 2 Cor 6:14-16b.7:1 and Paul's other Letters, I favour the latter possibility that only the 'testimonium' is of pre-Pauline origin. The stylised dialectic in 2 Cor 6:14-16a.7:1 conveys issues of purity from iniquities and idolatry related to Paul's use of temple imagery in 1 Corinthians. The testimonium thus serves as proof-text.

²⁹ The manuscript tradition of the New Testament does provide examples of the omission of an entire verse or passage, for instance, Mark 7:16, 11:26, 16:9-20, which may attest to different levels of redaction.

³⁰ Cf. e.g. the articles by Fitzmyer, 'Qumran and the Interpolated Paragraph in 2 Cor 6:14-7:1', 271-280, and Gnilka, '2 Cor 6:14-7:1: in the light of the Qumran texts and the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs', 48-68.

³¹ On this cf. e.g. Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 383: "What evidence there is would seem to be best satisfied by the hypothesis that the passage is of non-Pauline composition, but was incorporated by the apostle himself as he wrote this letter"; Martin, *2 Corinthians WBC*, 193-194: "we see 6:14-7:1 as authentic in the sense that Paul was the one to place it in the letter at this curious juncture"; Thrall, *II Corinthians I-VII ICC*, 35: "The discussion has shown that neither contextual nor theological arguments are sufficient to prove conclusively that 2 Cor 6:14-7:1 is non-Pauline". Cf. Bieringer, '2 Korinther 6,14-7,1 im Kontext des 2. Korintherbriefes', 570 about "eine gewisse Tendenz in der neueren Forschung, die Authentizität und Integrität von 6,14-7,1 zu bejahen".

³² Cf. e.g. Thrall, *II Corinthians I-VII ICC*, 35 about the supposition of an 'un-Pauline' hortatory tradition in 2 Cor 6:14-7:1: "That this tradition should be seen as specifically Qumranian is doubtful", thus arguing against a persisting idea in previous scholarship, e.g. that of J.A. Fitzmyer, J. Gnilka, R.P. Martin (193-195) as cited in previous notes.

3.2 Text, translation, and variant readings

6:14 Μὴ γίνεσθε ἑτεροζυγοῦντες ἀπίστοις· τίς γὰρ μετοχὴ δικαιοσύνης καὶ ἀνομία, ἢ τίς κοινωνία φωτὶ πρὸς σκότος; 15 τίς δὲ συμφώνησις Χριστοῦ πρὸς Βελιάρ, ἢ τίς μερίς πιστῶ μετὰ ἀπίστου; 16 τίς δὲ συγκατάθεσις ναῶ θεοῦ μετὰ εἰδώλων; ἡμεῖς γὰρ ναὸς θεοῦ ἐσμεν ζῶντος, καθὼς εἶπεν ὁ θεὸς ὅτι ἐνοικήσω ἐν αὐτοῖς καὶ ἐμπεριπατήσω καὶ ἔσομαι αὐτῶν θεὸς καὶ αὐτοὶ ἔσονται μου λαός. 17 διὸ ἐξέλθατε ἐκ μέσου αὐτῶν καὶ ἀφορίσθητε, λέγει κύριος, καὶ ἀκαθάρτου μὴ ἅπτεσθε· κἀγὼ εἰσδέξομαι ὑμᾶς 18 καὶ ἔσομαι ὑμῖν εἰς πατέρα καὶ ὑμεῖς ἔσεσθε μοι εἰς υἱοὺς καὶ θυγατέρας, λέγει κύριος παντοκράτωρ. 7:1 Ταύτας οὖν ἔχοντες τὰς ἐπαγγελίας, ἀγαπητοί, καθαρίσωμεν ἑαυτοὺς ἀπὸ παντὸς μολυσμοῦ σαρκὸς καὶ πνεύματος, ἐπιτελοῦντες ἁγιασύνην ἐν φόβῳ θεοῦ.

‘6:14 Do not become unevenly yoked with unbelievers; for what participation is there between righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship does light have with darkness? 15 And what agreement is there between Christ and Belial, or what does the believer share with the unbeliever? 16 And what union is there of God's Temple with idols? For we are the Temple of the living God, as God has said:

I will dwell among them and walk among them,³³ and I will be their God and they will be my people. 17 Therefore, go out of their midst and be separate, says the Lord, and do not remain in contact³⁴ with what is unclean; and I will receive you 18 and I will be a father to you and you will be sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty.

7:1 Thus, having these promises, beloved ones, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of flesh and spirit, accomplishing sanctification through³⁵ fear of God.

The verse in which the metaphor of the Temple figures, 2 Cor 6:16 b, is problematic. The established Greek text, reading ἡμεῖς γὰρ ναὸς θεοῦ ἐσμεν ζῶντος, is supported by various important codices (e.g. B, D, L, P) and minuscular manuscripts.³⁶ The main variant reading, ὑμεῖς γὰρ ναὸς θεοῦ ἐστε ζῶντος, supported by various ancient witnesses of the text, appears to harmonise 2 Cor 6:16 with Paul's temple imagery in 1 Corinthians. The rhetorical context of 2 Corinthians is, however, different from that of 1 Corinthians. In 1 Corinthians, Paul introduces the metaphor of the Temple through rhetorical questions to exhort his readers to stop their quarreling and iniquities. At the same time Paul presupposes the effect of such exhortations in 2 Corinthians and includes his addressees in the first person plural (cf. 2 Cor 3:18).³⁷

³³ The Hellenistic Jewish context does not necessarily prescribe a notion of God's 'indwelling in', as Philo's exegesis of LXX Num 14:9, ἀφέστηκεν ὁ καιρὸς ἀπ' αὐτῶν, ὁ δὲ κύριος ἐν ἡμῖν, in *Posterity* 122 attests. Thus, F.H. Colson & G.H. Whitaker, *Philo* II (Harvard UP: Cambridge, Mass. & London, 1929) 398-399 translate ὥσθ' οἷς μὲν ὁ ψυχῆς βίος τετίμηται, λόγος θεοῦ ἐνοικεῖ καὶ ἐμπεριπατεῖ, οἷς δ' ὁ τῶν ἡδονῶν, ἐφήμερον καὶ κατεψευσμένην ἔχουσιν εὐκαιρίαν, as "From this we see that the Divine word dwells and walks among those for whom the soul's life is an object of honour, while those who value the life given to its pleasures, experience good times that are transient and fictitious". Cf. my chap. 7, section 3.2, n. 61.

³⁴ This translation corresponds in my view best with the preceding verbs in 2 Cor 6:17. About the sense of the middle form ἅπτεσθαι as 'clinging to, remaining in contact with', cf. John 20:17.

³⁵ On this use of ἐν, Blass/Debrunner/Rehkopf, *Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Griechisch* (1990) § 219.

³⁶ B.M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (UBS: London & New York, 1975) 580 notes that the established Greek text is "strongly supported by both Alexandrian and Western witnesses" and further suggests that it is a *lectio difficilior* in view of the fact that the variant reading ὑμεῖς ... ἐστε reminds one of 1 Cor 3:16 and of the context, "while there is no reason for putting ἡμεῖς ... ἐσμεν in its stead".

³⁷ In many other cases in Paul's Letters, however, the first person plural denotes Paul's part in addressing his readers.

How does Paul's emphatic *we* in 2 Cor 6:16b affect our understanding of the temple imagery? One possible interpretation could be that Paul implies and doubly emphasises a contrast between 'we', the believers as God's Temple, and 'they', the unbelievers who persist in moral impurity. A second possible interpretation could be that Paul emphasises his relation and solidarity with the Corinthians as 'we' against 'they'; the opponents of Paul's gospel mission. Evidence for this interpretation occurs in 2 Cor 11, where Paul alludes to the opposition against his mission by other missionaries and apostles (cf. 2 Cor 11:2-29) and to his fear of the Corinthians' susceptibility to them (2 Cor 11:2-4).³⁸ A third possible interpretation concerns the contrast between 'we', the Christian believers as God's Temple, and 'they', the Israelites of the old covenant (cf. 2 Cor 3) who worship God in the Jerusalem Temple cult. *Mutatis mutandis*, this third interpretation is supported by scholars who advocate the idea that Paul's temple imagery substituted the Jerusalem Temple cult.

The problem of interpretation of Paul's temple imagery outlined above requires further discussion in the subsequent section. It should be noted here that Paul does not oppose the Israelites in general but the unbelievers who boast of their Jewish descent (cf. 2 Cor 3:4-18, 4:3-4f., 11:21-22). Paul even identifies with the Israelites, albeit in a polemical context of rival claims made by Paul's opponents (2 Cor 11:1-22f.).

The minor variant reading ἡμεῖς γὰρ ναοὶ θεοῦ ἐσμεν ζῶντος to 2 Cor 6:16b contradicts the line of thought in 2 Cor 6:16 which begins with the rhetorical contrast between the *singular* ναὸς θεοῦ and the *plural* εἰδωλα. Other variant readings can be omitted here, since they are far less significant for the meaning of the text or since they are not supported by enough textual witnesses to make them appear credible.

3.3 Cultic imagery in 2 Cor 6:14-7:1

2 Cor 6:14-7:1 incorporates concepts which are clearly derived from a contemporary Jewish context, while 2 Cor 6:16c-18 constitutes a 'testimonium' of verses from Scripture. The search for any substantial parallels on the pagan Hellenistic side can therefore be precluded as an issue beforehand. Nevertheless, the interpretation of the terms 'believer' and 'unbeliever' in the context of the pericope and in the wider context of 2 Corinthians could provide a clue to what extent pagan unbelievers, Paul's Christian-Jewish opponents or unbelievers in general are implied by the term ἄπιστοι.

2 Cor 6:16 most explicitly contrasts the concept of God's Temple, ναὸς θεοῦ, as applied to the community, to idolatry, the worship of εἰδωλα. The idea of this absolute contrast is firmly rooted in the Jewish monotheistic tradition. The perception of a disjunction between idolatry and the worship of God is characteristically Pauline, as the evidence of his other Letters, in particular in 1 Corinthians (cf. 1 Thess 1:9; 1 Cor 5:10-11, 6:9, 8:1.4-10f., 10:7.14-22, 12:2; Gal 5:20; Rom 2:22), reveals. Since Paul has been so intensively engaged in the exhortation against iniquities, among which idolatry is spelled out in 1 Cor 8 and 10, it is not surprising that the contrast between God's Temple and idols occurs in 2 Cor 6:16. Paul, after all, fears that the iniquities persist among the Corinthians (cf. 2 Cor 12:20-21).

With regard to 2 Cor 6:16, scholarly opinions differ on the question whether the interpretation of the entire pericope 2 Cor 6:17-7:1 can be related to the theme of the community as Temple in 2 Cor 6:16. Victor Paul Furnish has argued against this idea, even though he grants that 2 Cor 7:1 conveys *cultic* language.³⁹ In other scholarly literature, 2 Cor

³⁸ Note that in 2 Cor 11:22 Paul compares himself to his opponents in particularly *Israelite* categories.

³⁹ Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 375 against G.D. Fee.

6:14-7:1 in its entirety is in fact regarded as a passage focused on the issue of the community as the Temple of God.⁴⁰

2 Cor 6:17a-c, a verse quoting Isaiah 52:11, has been interpreted as the imperative of maintaining a cultic separation from uncleanness. C. Heil contrasted this idea of separation (ἀφορίζειν) to that which occurs in Paul's other Letters (Gal 1:15, 2:12; Rom 1:1).⁴¹ However, Paul's undisputed Letters are not entirely devoid of the idea of cleanness as a ritual boundary. In Paul's viewpoint in 1 Cor 7:13-14, the consecration of the unbeliever by the believer in a mixed marriage makes the difference between the holiness or, in the case of no consecration, uncleanness of the offspring.⁴² It may therefore not be anomalous for Paul to quote a proof-text about abstinence from every uncleanness, whose original context was motivated by cultic separation from impurity. The context of 2 Cor 6:17 precludes the idea of a purely cultic concern with separation from uncleanness, as the antithesis between righteousness and lawlessness (2 Cor 6:14) also attests to a moral concern.

Finally, 2 Cor 7:1 refers to defilement, μολυσμός, of both body and spirit, and contrasts this to the ideal of purification and perfect holiness. What kind of purification from what kind of defilement does Paul have in mind? We have an example in 1 Corinthians 8:7 of a reference to defilement: 'However, the knowledge is not with all people, but some, through their consciousness up to the present time of the idol, eat food as food offered to idols, and their conscience being weak is defiled'. In this example, the related verb μολυνεῖν is used and concerns defilement which comprises aspects of both body and mind. This is not to say that we should interpret 2 Cor 6:14-7:1 only in the light of the issue of food offered to idols.⁴³ In my view, we should rather understand 2 Cor 6:14-7:1 as serving a more comprehensive purpose of condemning all aspects in relationships with unbelievers which could cause an unbalanced situation by tending to the pagan, idolatrous side.

The 'we', which represents the Temple of the living God in 2 Cor 6:16b, links the apostle firmly with the addressees of his mission, thereby implicitly countering the claims of Jewish descent of Paul's opponents. As Paul has defined those who reject his gospel as unbelievers in 2 Cor 4:3-4, his purpose is not the substitution of the Israelite covenant, but its fulfilment through the gospel of Christ. Paul's notion of the community as the Temple of the living God should be understood in contrast to unbelief from the part of Gentiles, Jews and opponents of Paul alike.

4. Summary

The Second Letter to the Corinthians comprises a response to the growing opposition to Paul's gospel mission, urging the Corinthians to show solidarity with him. These circumstances also determine Paul's use of cultic imagery in 2 Corinthians.

2 Cor 2:14-17 represents the apostolic mission in cultic terms. Paul's positive analogy with the cultic service of the Temple cult underlines God's true commission of Paul's

⁴⁰ Cf. Martin, *2 Corinthians* WBC, 189-191, referring to this pericope as 'The Temple of the Living God (6:14-7:1)'; Thrall, *II Corinthians I-VII*, 478 about 2 Cor 6:17d-18: "The quotations serve to make the point that believers, as God's temple and God's people, are welcomed into a familial relationship with God"; Albl, "And Scripture cannot be broken", 177-178 refers to 'A Temple Testimonia Collection in 2 Cor 6:14-7:1'.

⁴¹ See Heil, 'Die Sprache der Absonderung in 2 Kor 6,17 und bei Paulus', 717-729 at 721-726. Cf. my discussion in section 3.1.2 above on 'non-Pauline ideas'.

⁴² Cf. Gillihan, 'A New Halakhic Interpretation of 1 Corinthians 7:14', 711-744.

⁴³ As done by Fee, 'II Corinthians VI.14-VII.1 and food offered to idols', 140-161 at 143: "I propose that this paraenesis has a direct relationship to the question of food offered to idols".

apostleship and the ultimate triumph of his gospel of Jesus Christ. In this connection, Paul contrasts his commission by God and the sincerity of his own apostleship to the insincerity of others who “peddle the word of God”

With regard to the rhetorical unit 2 Cor 6:14-7:1, we have shown that this unit can be integrated as a *Pauline* passage in the discussion about cultic terminology. Within 2 Cor 6:14-7:1, 2 Cor 6:16c-18 should be considered as Paul’s redaction of a pre-existing testimonium, as the theocentric notion of Lord (as apart from Paul’s christological usage) in this passage and the divergent introductory formula to the scriptural quotation reveal.

Paul identifies both the Corinthians and himself with the concept of the Temple of the living God in 2 Cor 6:16. The contrast between God’s Temple and idols in 2 Cor 6:16 is comparable to that between the service of the ‘living and true God’ and idols in 1 Thess 1:9 and to various exhortations against or negative references to idolatry in 1 Corinthians (1 Cor 5:10-11, 6:9, 8:1.4-10f., 10:7.14-22, 12:2).

The emphatic *we* as subject of the metaphor of the Temple in 2 Cor 6:16 provokes the question whether Paul may have in mind a particular contrast between ‘we’ and ‘they’, however identified. A closer examination of the context yields the idea that the unbeliever stands as a collective noun for the ‘they’, that is, those who do not believe Paul’s gospel and even oppose it. The emphatic self-definition as the Temple of the living God does not necessarily entail a substitution for the Jerusalem Temple, since those called to faith come from both Jewish and Gentile backgrounds. Furthermore, in spite of his reference to the Israelites in the context of the old ‘veiled’ covenant (2 Cor 3:4-18), Paul also identifies himself with the Israelites (cf. 2 Cor 11:22; Rom 11:1).